Barbless Circle Hook News

Issue 6, October 2012

Barbless anglers sweep 2012 Tokunaga Ulua Challenge!

Top 4 ulua caught on barbless!

National Marine Fisheries Service
PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER

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See details inside.

2012 Happenings

Bryson Kawaihae, largest 2012 BCH ulua, 85.3 lbs.

This year the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) Barbless Circle Hook (BCH) project was busier than ever with more outreach and tournaments. There were 3 new keiki tournaments and 6 new "Barbless Circle Hook Challenges". All in all, the project had outreach at 16 tournaments this year covering 5 different islands.

Some big news happened in July when barbless catches went 1-2-3 in Hawaii's top ulua tournament, the S. Tokunaga Ulua Challenge. Bryson Kawaihae and a few members of the Hilo Casting Club teamed up to fish this premier event. This was Bryson's first year using a barbless circle hook. He caught his first ulua 6 years ago and he was more than ready to catch another one. During the Ulua Challenge Bryson fished with his Uncle Rody Dasalla, his fishing mentor, and a few of the other Hilo Casting Club ulua gurus. Needless to say he took advantage of all the experience that was present on that trip. Bryson proved that barbless circle hooks work by catching not 1 but 2 huge uluas, 85.3 lbs and 72.7 lbs on barbless. Only 1 fish could qualify for the tournament. Bryson's first-place 85.3 lb barbless ulua and Uncle Rody's second-place barbless 79.9 lb ulua made the trip an unbelievable success. Angler Kalsey Nacis Jr., a consistent ulua catching junior angler who uses barbless circle hooks, had led the competition with his 66.9 lb barbless ulua right up until the last truck. Congratulations Kalsey on your huge ulua! Another great catch for the up-and-coming angler. Congratulations to all of you guys for your outstanding catches and thank you to S. Tokunaga Store for hosting the annual event!

Thanks for supporting the BCH project this year! Please send us photos and stories about your own barbless hook catches and experiences.

Manager's Corner

This year was one of increased activity which kept things busy throughout the year. There were 13 tournaments that featured the Barbless Circle Hook Challenge. The majority of these tournaments are regular supporters who decided to add the barbless challenge. There were also 6 new tournaments that joined us in 2012 and included barbless for the first time. We would like to welcome aboard the 15th Annual KMart, the 16th Annual P&R Ohana, the 2nd Annual Oahu Transit Services, the Kakaako Invitational O`io, the 3rd Annual Grace Bible, and the 1st Annual Mililani Middle School tournaments to the existing 7 tournaments that have featured the challenge for years.

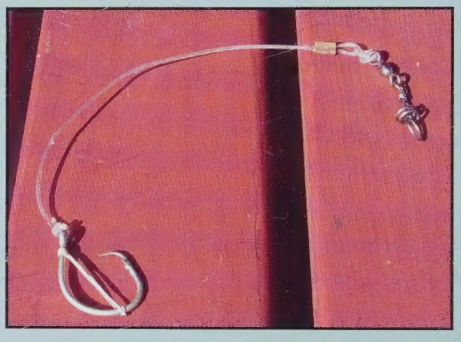
Every year there are many more requests and invitations for barbless outreach and tournament support than can be accomplished with available manpower and resources. This year I must again apologize for not being able to be there and accommodate every request. Every one of them is important to me.

Thank you to all of the fishermen in Hawaii who are using or have tried using barbless circle hooks this year. Special thanks go out to the tournament organizers who have consistently spread the message of responsible fishing to their participating anglers. Keep up the good work. We are making a difference.

Finally, remember to fish responsibly, show respect for other beach goers, think about what happens after you bankrupt, and please keep our fishing areas clean. It really is all up to US. Thanks for being role models...Kurt

Program Manager's Message

BARBLESS WORKS!



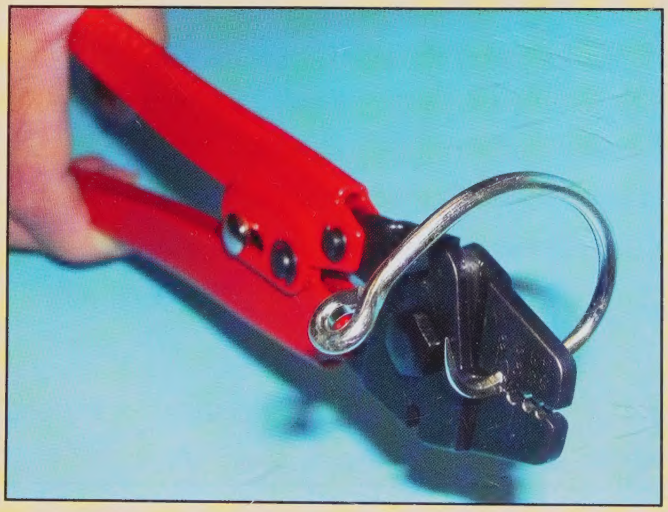
The fact that barbless circle hooks shed easily has been on record now since 2007. Each year an average of 5-10 seals show up with a barbed circle hook in some part of their body. The undeniable "proof" that the barbless circle hooks could easily self-shed originates from this 2007 Big Island incident which was documented by NOAA researchers:

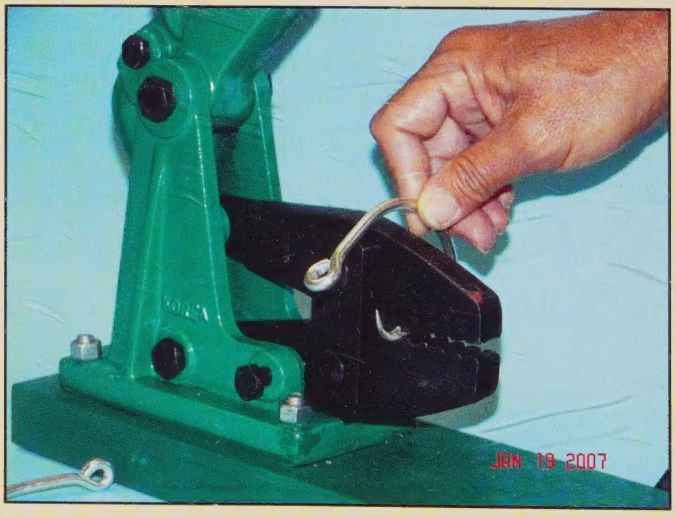
"Well, we got super lucky last night and got the hook out without even touching the seal. I've attached two pics so you can see the hook in the mouth and the hook by itself. It appears that the fisherman may have cut off the barb so the seal actually pulled the hook out herself when she reacted to me getting close, she moved away and popped it right out!!"

A lot of unintended interactions can have a similar outcome if barbless circle hooks are used by responsible fishermen. Many thanks to the fisherman who used this one...you were definitely ahead of the game.

Please practice responsible fishing. Keep on using barbless hooks.

Barbless circle hooks aren't sold in stores. Here's how to make your own...





Oio Tagging Projects

Pacific Islands Fisheries Group Oio Tagging Project

PIFG Tags 3000 Oio!

Starting in 2010 with the support of the NOAA Saltonstall-Kennedy grant, in just 16 months the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (PIFG) Oio Tagging Project Team has successfully completed tagging the targeted 3000 Oio. The approach and implementation of this project is very likely the first of its kind for Oio or bonefish research and unheard of in the fisheries research community. PIFG is not aware of anyone tracking, capturing, and containing large schools of Oio for mass tagging using this fishing method. The tagging effort was accomplished in just four trips with the help of dedicated Waianae commercial fisherman, Carl Jellings. The final tagging trip on July 22, 2012 resulted in a school of 1100 fish being captured, held and tagged. PIFG sends a very big Mahalo out to Mr. Jellings. Without his expertise, the success of this project would not have been possible.

PIFG's success in deploying the tags has already yielded valuable knowledge and data with much more expected to come as recaptures continue to be reported. To date, 60 recaptures have been reported with some indicating fish having travelled over 10 miles away from their tag site.

If you catch an Oio with a green tag in it, please call the telephone number on the tag to report valuable data, including tag number, date captured, length, weight, general location, and your contact info. In return you will receive a t-shirt featuring artwork by the late artist and fisherman, Mike Sakamoto.

TROPHY VS LOMI
O'io
Bonefish
PIFG
O'io Tagging Project
If you recover a tagged o'io call 265-4962
Be prepared to provide the following critical information:
1. Your name, address, and telephone number.
2. Capture date, island, and fishing location.
3. Tag number.
4. Fork length – measure from tip of the nose to "V" in the tail.
5. There are 2 species - Sharp Jaw Albula virgata which has a bright green/yellow dot under the pectoral fins, and Round Jaw Albula glossodonta has no green/yellow dot.
Reward
In return for your valuable information, you will receive a free special edition t-shirt featuring original artwork (seen above) by artist and fisherman Mike Sakamoto.
For More Information
PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES GROUP
150 Hamakua Dr. PBN# 430
Kailua, HI 96734
Ph: 808 265-4962
Web: fishtoday.org

Brian Funai
PIFG Oio Tagging Project

Oio Tagging Project, Hawaii Cooperative Research Unit, UH

The Oio Tagging Project began in 2003 with the following objectives:

1) Determine the ecological, biological, and cultural importance of oio in Hawai'i.

• Through samples collected from volunteer anglers and fishing tournaments we are examining the diet, age, and spawn-

ing cycle. These projects are finishing up and will be available to the public later this year.

2) Encourage a greater conservation ethic for marine resources through tag and release.

• We give out and collect tagging data, and continue sponsorship of a tagging category in many nearshore fishing tournaments.

3) Foster collaboration and trust between the fishing community, scientists, and resource managers.

• Continue participation in local fishing club meetings and outings. Provide presentation of project findings at fishing expos, school meetings, youth fishing events, and at public forums such as the Hanauma Bay Lecture Series.

4) Provide information on the oio fishery by analyzing angler-based data.

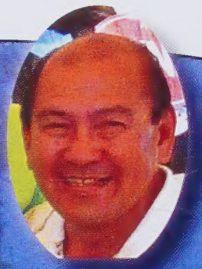
• Analyses provide information on the recreational oio's fishery including catch-per-unit-effort, size distributions, location and time of capture.

Results for May 2003 – July 2012

- 6,160.62 fishing hours reported
- 515 anglers registered
- 2,304 oio tagged
- 57 oio recaptured
- Tags applied on Hawaii, Kauai, Lanai, Maui, Molokai, Oahu

Through the dedication of our volunteer anglers we are achieving our goals and growing beyond our expectations. Thank you all for your help and hard work.

Kimberlee Harding
Oio Tagging Project Coordinator
http://oiotaggingproject.com/



Earl Miyamoto

MARINE WILDLIFE PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH BCHP

Lisa White

Who are we? A special project at the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Staff: Earl Miyamoto (Oahu), Lisa White (Oahu), Mimi Olry (Kauai).

What's our main focus? The prevention and reduction of monk seal and sea turtle interactions with humans.

Our purpose? To reduce the impact of accidental fishery interactions with monk seals and sea turtles.

How are we doing that?
By encouraging recreational fishermen to fish barbless!

Why fish barbless? Increasing numbers of Hawaiian monk seals and honu in nearshore waters make it likely that you will encounter one of these animals while fishing. To reduce your impact should an interaction take place try fishing barbless. Using a barbless hook accomplishes two very positive things. First, should you hook a turtle or seal, injury to the animal will be reduced. Second, you will be sending a very strong message that you are aware of the animals, respect their presence, and are taking proactive measures to mitigate any possible interactions.

A barbless hook makes dehooking an animal much simpler and reduces the trauma to the animal. It also increases the likelihood of the animal shedding the hook on its own. In the event you do hook an animal you can attempt to remove the hook or cut the line as short as possible but, only if it can be done without putting your personal safety at risk.

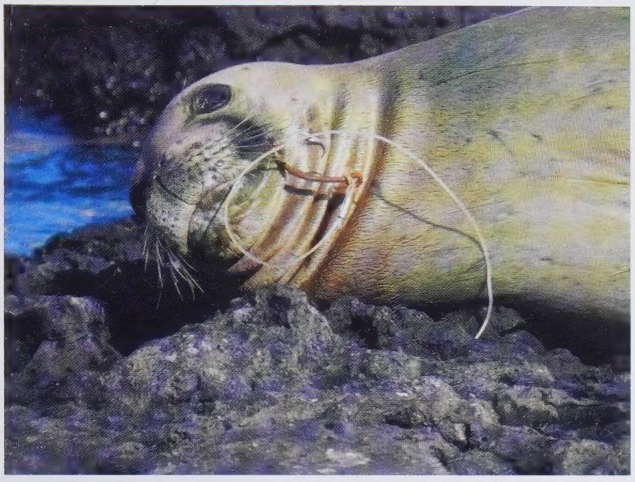
Fishing barbless makes the nonfishing public aware that we, too, care about the animals which inhabit the ocean we fish to feed our families and recreate, and that we consider a healthy marine environment an essential and vital part of the enjoyment of living in Hawaii.

Mahalo to all of you who already fish barbless and to Kurt for allowing us to partner with his project!

Contact us with questions about seals or turtles at (808) 832-5017.

Monk Seals and Marine Turtles in 2012

Monk Seals



Although the precise number of monk seals in the main Hawaiian Islands is unknown, 152 individual seals were identified in 2011. The count did not include Niihau, so the actual population size within the main islands is probably around 200 individuals. Each year some of them are accidentally hooked by shorefishing gear. In recent years, approximately 10 seals have been hooked annually. In 2012, through mid-September, 11 seals had been accidentally hooked. Two of the hookings resulted in death of the animal because the hook was deeply ingested. An additional seal was brought into temporary captivity for surgical hook removal and survived. Of the remaining 8 hookings, 3 seals lost the hook without assistance, NOAA personnel successfully removed hooks from 4 seals, and 1 case remains pending. The proactive voluntary use of a self-shedding barbless circle hook by fishermen could result in a less injurious outcome should an accidental hooking occur.—John Henderson, Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program, NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center.

Marine Turtles

Hawaiian sea turtle strandings have been documented by the Marine Turtle Research Program of PIFSC since 1982. Currently, nearly 6400 stranding reports show approximately 1500 turtles were involved with fishing gear such as line, net or hooks. Of those, a little more than half involved fishing line and approximately 30% involved hooks. For all fishing gear interactions about 40% of these turtles were successfully released alive. In 2011, 63 (20% of the total of 312) reports of turtles were determined to have hook and/or line as the main cause of the stranding. As of June 2012, 35 (19 were released alive) cases of turtles were found with fishing gear as compared to 13 cases involving fibropapillomatosis. In recent years, fishing gear interactions have increased and is now the second highest cause of strandings for the Hawaiian green sea turtle, with fibropapillomatosis being the highest known cause. Reports are also received from recreational divers about entangled or hooked turtles, but these reports are not included in the stranding reports. The use of barbless circle hooks may allow sea turtles and other incidentally captured animals to be easily released without much harm to the animal. It may also prevent loss of fishing gear if the hook can be dislodged.—Ms. Shawn K. K. Murakawa, Protected Species Division, NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center.

A live turtle found at Hanauma Bay with barbed hooks, one in the neck and one in the left front flipper. The hooks were surgically removed and the turtle successfully released back to Hanauma Bay.

Kids' Activities

Photo by Hanapaa.com.

Spalding House Boys and Girls Club
December 16, 2011

The BCH project partnered with the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (PIFG) to provide information and education on responsible fishing. Volunteers from various groups and clubs within PIFG came together to organize another Boys and Girls Club fishing

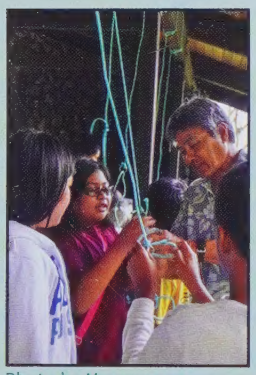


Photo by Hanapaa.com.

Photo by Hanapaa.com.

education outreach. On a partly cloudy Friday morning, the students rode their big yellow school bus to the Hoomaluhia Botanical Garden. Three educational stations were set up so students could complete the following: Hawaii fishing rules and regulations, fishing and diving equipment, and knot tying and barbless circle hooks. The kids had fun learning new things at each station before lunch. The main event was fishing

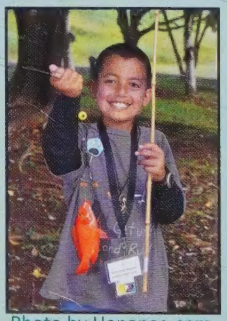


Photo by Hanapaa.com.

in the impoundment using their newfound knowledge and equipment. It was only bamboo pole fishing but for these novices it was all they needed to have fun and discover a new passion in life. Pictures of the event can be seen at http://www.hanapaa.com/Other/PIFG%20-Boys/20642862_4FQZC3#!i=1636591253&k=BQhT4KF.

Photo by Hanapaa.com.

Leilehua High School student project
January 24, 2012

Leilehua High School junior Ian Kaopua did his senior project on overfishing. Part of his project was to hold a fishing tournament to highlight sustainable fishing through encouraging tag and release, fishing only with barbless

Photo by Matt Ramsey.

hooks, and supporting research efforts. The tournament weigh-in was held at his house where the message to the participants was delivered by Ian himself.

Hawaii Yacht Club February 12, 2012

The BCH project was invited to the 29th Annual Hawaii Yacht Club & Waikiki Yacht Club Junior Fishing Tournament on Sunday February 12 to provide information to the participants. The catch-and-live-release rules were in place as was the stipulation for the anglers themselves to bait their own hooks, fight the fish, and remove it from the hook. The barbless or circle hook emphasis for fisherman safety and less injury for the fish to be released was highlighted during the opening address to the tournament participants. Lots

of fish were caught and at the weigh-in the comment of "I have never seen so many lively fish" was heard. The use of barbless hooks was credited for this as it greatly reduced the time and injury to the catches. No children were injured during the event but one captain was hooked in the butt. Luckily it only penetrated his pants and was barbless. All of the kids went home winners.

Mililani Middle School Fishing Tournament April 28, 2012

Mililani Mauka Middle School's fishing club had its first annual

fishing tournament this year.

The weigh-in was on Saturday, April 28 at Haleiwa's Alii Beach Park. The club members could sign up for barbless, ulua/papio tagging, or oio tagging. Clay Tam (State Ulua Tagging Project), Kim Harding (Oio Tagging Project), Richard Beebe (PIFG), and Billy Chang (PIFG), and Lisa White (State Marine Wildlife Program) were the outreach and education team at this event.

There were 7 fish caught by the 7 anglers that signed up for barb-

less out of the 17 participants that signed up. That's pretty good catching. Moana (2), papio, weke, aholehole, puffer, and Christmas tree wrasse made up the barbless catch. A big round of thank yous go to the MMS Fishing Club organizers—Tracy Momohara, Ken Johnston, Jon Ishikawa, and Trevor Umetsu. Sorry if I missed anyone else on their dedicated staff. A big thank you also goes out to the parents who made this possible for the kids.

Lanai Keiki Catch Tournament May 5, 2012

The 8th Annual Lanai Keiki Catch Tournament at Manele Bay again had a conservation objective which

promoted catch and release if the fish were not destined for the dinner table. The kids were again very

More Kids' Activities

energized for the free event that covered both a night and a day of fishing which allowed them to

catch a wide variety of species. There were many categories for all age groups which allowed most of the kids a chance to win. The event allowed for a special "family time" bonding-type outing outside of the home that is sorely lacking in our normal rushed daily routine. The free raffle for all the participating kids allowed each to be a "winner." Other attractions, like outreach by the BCH project, the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group, and a Maui gyotaku artist, provided more excitement for the kids and adults. This was a very special annual event that was looked forward to by all.

The Molokai Keiki Tournament.

Molokai Keiki
June 30, 2012

The 2nd Annual Keiki Tournament, "Molokai Style" was a totally free event for the 130 of the 2–12-year-old keiki participants and their parents. Held at beautiful Poolau beach on the west end of Molokai the totally barbless, catch and release bamboo pole tournament's goal was to give the keiki an opportunity to learn how to fish, practice catch and release, and above all...HAVE FUN! Everything was provided for each keiki

angler. Lunch, snacks, ice cold water, frozen pops, and more made this event a winner. Fishing was good with many different reef fish and other interesting things caught, weighed, and released. Many thanks to Shane and the gang for inviting us over. See you next year!

New Hope Hawaii Kai
2nd Annual Keiki Fishing Tournament
July 28, 2012

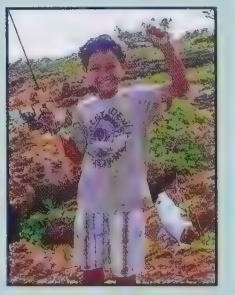
Well-known for running his "Fishing Ministry", Uncle Mike Kim from New Hope Hawaii Kai and the gang put on a fun event for the budding fishers in their congregation. The 2nd annual Keiki Fishing Tournament was held at

the Maunalua Bay Park with 72 kids and their parents showing up in force for the morning event. There was lots of excitement, fun, prizes, and even an old-fashioned "fishing game" for the little kids (infants to 6 yrs) where everyone is a guaranteed winner. The adults enjoyed the quality family time as well. Quite a few fish and miscellaneous other creatures were caught and live released in this catch-and-release tournament. Screams and advice were being heard with every hook-up. One bamboo pole was even yanked into the water by a fish despite being wedged between some rocks. Everyone watched as the pole was pulled around the small cove for 10 minutes before coming close enough to shore to be retrieved by another angler. The result was a nice obake weke. The largest fish caught was an unusual balloon fish *(Chilomycterus reticulatus)* which was 12" long.

One child hooked herself in the foot but managed to remove it without any help. This prompted the organizers to say that they would be going all barbless next year for child safety and to help the fish. Maintaining a clean fishing area was another lesson. After the competition the entire congregation cleaned up the entire fishing area before getting their hot dog lunch and prizes.

Kalaheo Elementary School Fishing Club September 7, 2012

The Kalaheo Elementary School Fishing Club on Kauai has increased its membership. Teacher Joel Kawate now has his entire 4th grade homeroom class plus some 5th graders in the club. They meet for an hour every Friday and the studious ones who completed all their homework, stayed out of trouble, and obtained parental permission were able to go fishing after school for a few hours (using barbless hooks of course). This year a white papio was caught and released by the boys while they learned to target the delicious but elusive moi. For the kids, the fishing experience and knowledge gained from Mr. Kawate is priceless. You guys are very lucky to have a teacher like that. Congratulations on your barbless papio!



Other Events

The 6th Annual Fishing and Seafood Festival October 9, 2011

The 6th Annual Fishing and Seafood Festival once again drew more than 20,000 people. The Barbless Circle Hook booth was again in high gear as the multitudes of locals dropped in to see what's new and get their free barbless circle hooks

while they lasted. The project recognized Stephen Arquitola for his 95.7 lb barbless ulua which took top honors for 2011. It was his first time trying out the hooks but definitely won't be his last. Another noontime honor went to Hilo Casting Club president Kahana Itozaki who caught a 100 lb ulua on a barbless hook. His 101.2 lb barbless ulua is only the second ever caught. Stephen and Kahana willingly shared their fishing knowledge with everyone who came by the booth. Congratulations to both anglers on their exceptional catches.

The State of Hawaii's Ulua Tagging Project, a partner of the BCH

project, hosted the booth next door. In it was the head of the barbless 100-lb ulua which was on display. The interested public went back and forth looking at our banner picture, meeting the actual angler, Kahana Itozaki, then seeing the actual ulua head on display. It made for a priceless presentation and kept both booths busy. The Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center's Bob Humphreys contributed by providing an otolith viewing setup which allowed the public to see what the big deal was all about on donating the head to science.

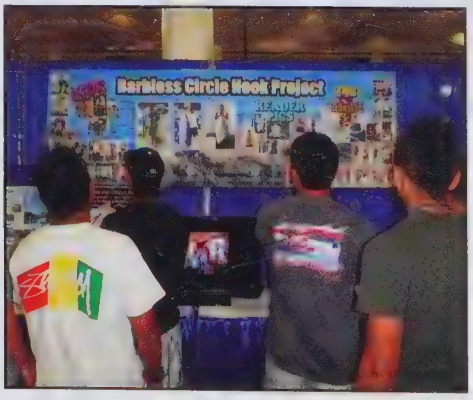
West Marine Hawaii March 22, 2012

The West Marine Grand Opening provided the project a chance to outreach to fishermen and boaters at their non-profit charity event "Cruising for a Cause." The BCH

project partnered with West Marine staff to place 500 BCH brochures in the informational packet given out to all attendees. At the evening event the project partnered with the non-profit Pacific Islands Fisheries Group for outreach in West Marine's fishing department.

Hawaii Ocean Exposition April 20, 2012

The 4th Annual Hawaii Ocean Expo proved to be very busy with the BCH volunteers distributing almost 1000 packs of outreach materials and more than 1000 free samples of barbless circle hooks. The highlight of the Expo was the 4th Annual GT Masters Cup fishing tournament which serves to showcase the popular long-time local



shoreline fishing activity.

Friends of Kewalo Basin June 2, 2012

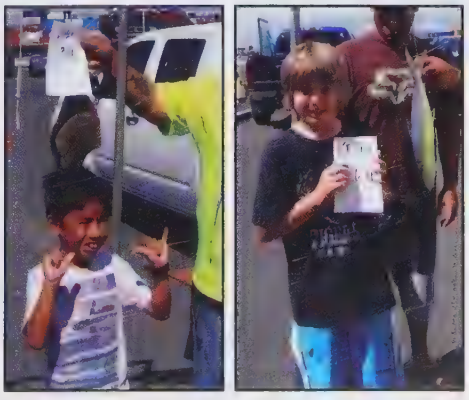
The Friends of Kewalo Basin, a 501(c)(3) grass roots organization of recreational users of the area get together every year for a clean-up event. An estimated 150 people showed up in this fifth year to help out on this work day, which resulted in the Kewalo park being immaculate from their volunteer efforts. As usual, there were prize giveaways, drawings, lunch, educational booths, and announcements on issues pertaining to the Kewalo area. The project was very fortunate as the organizers felt that it was important to educate the public on barbless hooks since there is a lot of fishing at the park. Barbless partners Earl Miyamoto and Lisa White from the State Marine Wildlife Program had a great time handing out project information and free packs of barbless circle hooks.

BCH Tournament Challenges

Oahu Transit Service October 23, 2011

The Oahu Transit Service 2nd Annual Family and Friends Shoreline Fishing Tournament featured its first "Barbless Challenge." The company tournament attracted an interesting mix of folks ranging from fishing newbies to a few very seasoned shorecasters. The 16% of all anglers signing up to try barbless is a normal percentage for a first time. This year no barbless-hooked fish were brought to the scales, however, there were many stories about the ones that got away. The organizers themselves entered the tournament, fished with the barbless hooks, and related their positive

experiences to the audience at the weigh-in. The largest ulua weighed in at 33 lbs which is a pretty respectable size for this off-season tournament. The largest oio was an 8-lb sharp jaw which was a nice-sized fish for the beginning of the oio season. The kids were not bound by species categories and brought many different types of fishes to the scale. Everyone enjoyed the free live band, free food, and abundant raffle prizes.



Da Weighmaster's Obake Shootout III October 30, 2011

Photo by Hanapaa.com.

The Obake Shootout had a very successful tournament weigh-in at POP Pier 38. Registration showed a total of 248 entrants with 95 in barbless, 52 in papio/ulua tagging, 50 in oio tagging, and 54 in the Mike Sakamoto Scholarship Challenge. Eight barbless anglers weighed in 12 fishes—10 oio, 1 ulua, and 1 barracuda. The top 3 barbless oio took 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place in the Oio

Division. This year the weigh-in was very hectic with a long line of anglers and more than the usual amount of fishes being weighed in. The kids

Tournament Activity – 2012

Photo by Hanapaa.com.

did not have as many restrictions on species so they brought in a wide variety of fishes. The one unique weigh-in fish was a live humuhumu, the State fish. The girl that caught it decided to keep it alive in an aerated bucket to weigh in so she could release it later. The Pacific Islands Fisheries Group members recognized her conservation efforts with a special announcement and prize.

KKC Invitational Oio Tournament November 6, 2011

This is the first year that the Kakaako Kasting Club has invited the BCH project to host a "Barbless Challenge" in their traditional fall invitational oio jackpot tournament. In this first year, there were 80 participants of which 30% signed up for the "Barbless Challenge." In an effort to promote responsible fishing and releasing small fish, the tournament's minimum qualifying weight was 5 lbs across the board for all species. This oio tournament was won by Francis Ganitano with an 8.4-lb barbless sharp jaw oio. Fourth place was won by Garrett Yokoyama with a 7.05 lb barbless round jaw oio. The barbless anglers weighed in 7 oio, 1 omilu,

and 1 white ulua. The largest barbless ulua was a 36.4 lb white ulua that was the 4th largest of the tournament (unfortunately it placed out of the money).

Atlapac 7th Annual Oio Tournament December 4, 2011

Three shorefishing clubs participated in this annual invitational where a Barbless Challenge is featured. Participation was good in this

late season tournament and there was a 76% entry rate for the barbless category. Strong winds and rain was the weather pattern for the fishing period. The catches were very light this year with only a handful of oio being caught. Unfortunately no fish were caught on barbless. Nevertheless, the club members had a good time visiting with each other and sharing experiences. Fish-

ing was slow, with many anglers reporting not even getting any strikes at all. This is unusual because this is the traditional oio season. Last month at the Atlapac Obake and the Kakaako Kasting club tournaments, there were loads of oio with anglers lined up to weigh in. What a difference a couple of weeks and weather makes.

Eastside Challenge January 29, 2012

The weigh-in for the Eastside Challenge Fishing Tournament

was held at the Heeia pier. Fifty-four percent of the participants signed up for the Barbless Challenge. Catches were light and consisted only of oio. No other species were weighed in. Eleven fish (> 3 lbs) qualified of which 2 were caught using barbless circle hooks. The largest

for the day was a 9.5-lb round jaw. There were no sharp jaw oio caught. Many of the competitors mentioned that despite putting in a lot of effort very few bites came from the target fishes and that the usual miscellaneous incidental and bycatch species were not biting either. The fishermen have noticed that water temperature has been pretty cold lately and theorized that the colder temperature may have put the bite off.

GT Masters Cup
April 20, 2012

An annual highlight of the Hawaii Ocean Expo is the GT Masters Cup Fishing Tournament (tournament pics at http://www.hanapaa.com/Other/GT-Masters-2012/22617654_DVv2gS#!p=1&n=12). The "Barbless Challenge" within the tournament had 91 participants out of 311 total. Although there were quite a few fish caught on barbless hooks, only 2 white ulua qualified. Of those, the 42.5 lber placed third in the overall competition (missed second place by 1/2 lb). The angler Randall Muramoto was a first-time user of the hooks. He checked off barbless on the form (no cost to enter) and thought that it meant that he had to fish all barbless, so he did. He said that he tried every tool in his tool box trying to smash down the barbs, even a hammer and punch. He did manage to smash them eventually. He caught that ulua and said he is now convinced that they work and he'll spread the word to his friends. His fishing partner did not use barbless and caught the winning 48.9-lb ulua on his last cast before going to the weigh-in Sunday morning. After watching Randall catch his fish he'll be using barbless next tournament too.

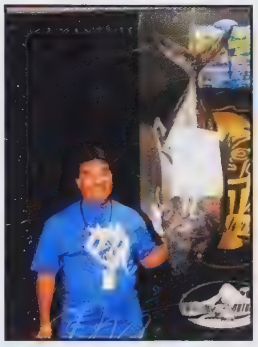


Photo by Hanapaa.com.

Grace Bible Shoreline Fishing Tournament
May 20, 2012

The Grace Bible Shoreline Fishing Tournament was another first time "Barbless Circle Hook Challenge" participant. The barbless challenge hosted 36% of the anglers in this first year. Lots of fish were weighed in with Stan Bennet winning the ulua division with a 70.5 lber caught with a standard circle hook. Many anglers reported that the barbless hooks just didn't get any bites for some reason. Only 2 fish were landed by barbless. Randall Marumoto (2nd place in the GT Masters Cup) weighed in a 4.76-lb omilu and junior angler Kapu Yasumura got a 3.49-lb round lip oio to complete the barbless landings. Many species of fishes were caught but just not on barbless circle hooks. Better luck next year.

14th Annual Pole Benda!
May 27, 2012

The premature demise of the beloved Pole Benda that was reported last year was thankfully NOT true. The 14th Annual Pole Benda weigh-in was up and running again at the Thelma Parker Gym in beautiful Waimea. This year, 74% of the anglers signed up for barbless. The show of support for the barbless project at this tournament has been steady.

Tournament Activity – 2012

This year 5 fish were caught using barbless circle hooks. Mike Ignacio, member of the Hilo Casting Club, caught a 31.1-lb white ulua,

the largest qualifying barbless fish in the competition. The highlight of the tournament was Marc Spatz's 74-lb ulua, which turned out to be the largest fish of the competition. He disqualified his 74-lb white ulua from the Barbless Challenge, because although he was certain that the hook he used was a barbless one it had broken during the landing of the fish and the tip section with the smashed barb was lost during the confusion. Therefore there was no definitive "proof" of a barbless circle hook being used. His honesty set an example for all the anglers to follow.

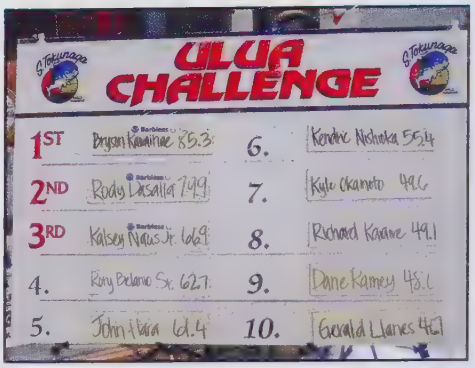
The remainder of the barbless anglers did pretty well considering the reportedly slow bite. Zachary Carvalho caught a 1-lb 13.2 oz alaihi mama,

J Sean Giron posed with his proud father with a nice 12.7-lb omilu, and Tevin Tolentino weighed in a 5-lb omilu. Congratulations to all the anglers, and it is nice to have the Pole Benda baaaack!

For more pictures and stories visit http://www.facebook.com/barbles-scirclehook.

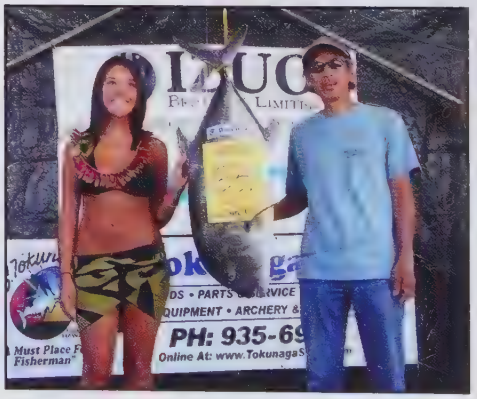
Tokunaga Ulua Challenge, June 10, 2012

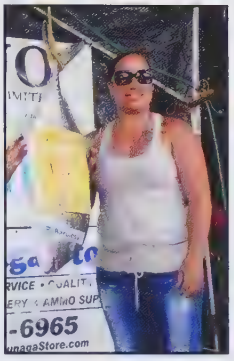
The BCH project hit another milestone with a sweep of the top 3 places in the S. Tokunaga's Ulua Challenge shoreline fishing tournament by uluas caught on barbless circle hooks. The Ulua Challenge is


ULUA CHALLENGE
1ST Bryan Kawainui 85.3
2ND Rody Lasalle 74.9
3RD Kalsey Nacu Jr. 66.9
4. Rory Belano Sr. 62.7
5. John Hara 61.4
6. Kendre Nichoka 55.4
7. Kyle Okamoto 49.6
8. Richard Kawane 49.1
9. Dane Kamey 48.6
10. Gerald Llanes 46.7

already the largest shoreline tournament in Hawaii and it keeps growing every year. This year the Ulua Challenge broke its own record with a total of 569 anglers signing up. The 261 (46%) anglers entered in the Barbless Challenge is also a new all-time record. The higher numbers of participants doesn't necessarily mean that the catches were also going to be record breaking as well. After all it is called fishing not catching. This year turned out to be a slow year for catching white uluas but a good year for omilu catches.

Fishing was reported to be very slow and many hard-core anglers came back empty-handed. However, there were a few bright spots for a few lucky barbless anglers. Danny Arase brought a nice 33.1-lb ulua to





the scale, Kyle Kodama had a 31.2 lber, and Reyn Fujishige caught a 22.1 lber. Female angler Jolie Burgos made her mark with an 18.9-lb ulua to represent the women of the competition.

After a very slow start the highlight of the tournament occurred at the very end with the very last truck and catches taking the top honors. In the cooler were the 3 largest uluas

of the tournament. Up to that point 9-year-old Kalsey Nacis Jr. had been in first place with a 66.9-lb barbless white ulua. Bryson Kawaihae weighed in 2 barbless uluas, a 72.2

and an 85.3 lber. Rules state that only a single fish can qualify in each category so the 72.2 lber was disqualified while the 85.3 lber took the tournament's top honors. Uncle Rody Dasalla weighed in his barbless ulua a 79.9 lber placing second. All this made for a tournament ending on an exciting last-minute conclusion with the 4 largest fish caught on barbless circle hooks.

For additional coverage visit: http://www.bigislandvideonews.com/2012/06/14/video-ulua-challenge-organizers-stress-conservation-safety/.

37th Hilo Casting Club Fishing Tournament
July 14, 2012

The 37th Annual Hilo Casting Club's tournament consistently has a high percentage of anglers that sign up to enter the Barbless Challenge. This year was no exception with 56% signing up. The largest barbless ulua was caught by Jarret

Hanohano. Jarret caught a 73.6-lb ulua and placed second in the ulua division. Hilo Casting Club president Kahana Itozaki placed 7th in the ulua division with a barbless 41.2 lber. He

also placed 4th overall in the omilu division with a barbless 10.2-lb omilu. Kahana weighed in 3 fish, all caught on barbless circle hooks. He also mentioned that he lost one ulua while using barbless but shrugged it

Tournament Activity – 2012

off saying that it happens even with the barbed hooks. The omilu division was won by Tommy Cabanting using a barbless circle hook. His 19.9

lber took first place honors. He also caught a 12.2-lb almaco jack (kahala) and a 8.5-lb uku on barbless as well.

The overall competition was won by Dane Ramey who caught a 109.4-lb white ulua. It was his first 100 lber. Congratulations to the newest member of the 100 Lber Club. There was a lot of excitement in the Naniloa

Hotel lobby where the weigh-in was held. It is the only tournament weigh in that is done in a major hotel lobby. The Naniloa Hotel supports local activities and brings the "local flavor" to all its hotel guests who come to Hawaii to experience the special things that we all enjoy.

15th Annual KMart Shoreline Fishing Tournament July 15, 2012

The KMart Shoreline Fishing Tournament is in its 15th year of competition. This very popular Kauai tournament that is all about giving back to and supporting the local community annually gets about 300 entrants. This year was no exception with about 329 entrants with a 2:1 ratio of adults to kids. This is a very

family-oriented format with lots of chances for the kids to win. This year was the first time that barbless hooks were incorporated into the tournament. The KMart folks showed their support by making this the first tournament in the State to have barbless as an actual tournament category with prizes and money from the tournament itself. They gave away cash and prizes to the top 3 barbless catches that were entered by the angler into the category. In addition to the KMart barbless category, NOAA held a Barbless Challenge. Kauai's barbless anglers showed strong support making up approximately 43% of the total participants in this first year.

Barbless circle hook catches included a 46-lb ulua which placed 4th overall, a 45.5-lb ulua which placed 5th overall, and other catches consisting of a wide variety of reef fishes—nenue, awa awa, oio, moray eel,

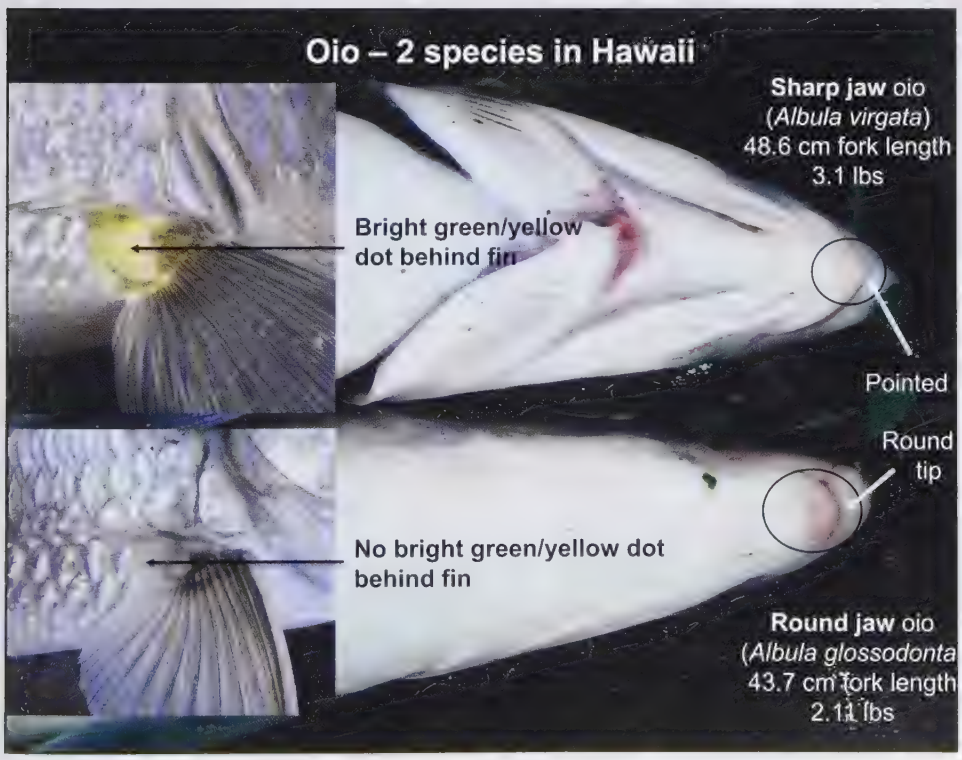
and toau. Many thanks to the KMart gang for hosting this family-style community event and for promoting family values, healthy lifestyle and responsible fishing. They have been giving back to the community by running this tournament for 15 long years and they are committed to continuing the tradition. All of the tournament results are here: http://thegardenisland.com/sports/

kmart-releases-winners-from-shoreline-fishing-tourney/article_bdb132a2-d625-11e1-b091-001a4bcf887a.html.

16th Annual P&R Ohana Shoreline Fishing Tournament August 19, 2012

The 16th Annual P&R Ohana Shoreline Fishing Tournament weigh-in was held at the Honokaa Gym. This was the first year for the Barbless Challenge. The overall tournament consisted of 350 entrants of all ages. The varied divisions that this tournament includes makes it fun for all ages to compete on level playing fields. The tournament hosts men, women, teen, children, kupuna, and ohana divisions.

The barbless hook anglers did a bang-up job for this being just the first year. In the Men's division Kahana Itozaki caught 3 fish on barbless—the 2nd place 53.4-lb ulua, a 48.4-lb ulua (only one fish qualifies), and an uku. In the women's division, Brendalyn Viernes caught a 7.6-lb omilu on barbless and placed second. Edwyna Tancayo placed 17th in the women's division weighing in a 4.3 oz barbless popaa. In the kupuna division, Susan Zimdars placed second with a 4 lb 14 oz table boss. David Belo placed third weighing in a 3 lb 13.8 oz table boss. This was truly a family fun event that give back to the community and even supported the local HS girls volleyball team by hosting a plate lunch sale at the weigh-in. Go girls!



MONK SEAL SIGHTINGS HOTLINE: 808-220-7802

MARINE TURTLE STRANDINGS HOTLINE: 808-983-5730

Barbless Circle Hook Catches By You!

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Barbless Circle Hook Catches By You!

If you would like to have your barbless catches listed, please call, e-mail, or write me and I'll be glad to add it to the growing list of anglers and catches.

Send us photos of your barbless hook catches so we can add them to our growing photo list. Sending in your photos will give us implicit permission to use them for publicizing the NOAA Barbless Circle Hook Program.

For more info, contact: Kurt Kawamoto (808) 983-5326 or Kurt.Kawamoto@noaa.gov. 2570 Dole Street, Honolulu, HI 96822-2396.

7TH ANNIVERSARY

Hawaii FISHING SEAFOOD Festival

PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES GROUP

TASTE, WATCH AND ENJOY THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL!

A PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES GROUP COMMUNITY EVENT

Featuring Sean Na'auao - Fish and Poi

Sunday, Oct. 7, 2012 9am - 4pm

Pier 38 Honolulu Fishing Village

FREE Admission -- FREE Parking HCC

www.hawaiifishingfestival.com

A week long celebration of fishing, seafood and giving back to our community.
Fish Today for Fish Tomorrow!

Hawaii FISHING SEAFOOD Festival Week SCHEDULE

www.hawaiifishingfestival.com

FISHING FOR HAWAII'S HUNGRY

September 28, 29 & 30

A FREE trolling tournament benefiting the IHS. All fish will be donated to help feed Hawaii's hungry. Weigh-in @ Pier 38 on Sunday, September 30 from 10am-12pm. Entry by Sept 21 for chance to WIN trip to Las Vegas.

SEA-TO-ME TASTING NIGHT @ Pier 38

October 5 from 5:30-8:30pm

A night of seafood prepared by culinary students from Kauai, Oahu, Maui and Big Island. Limited tickets are available. Benefiting the Culinary Institute of the Pacific. Email pacificfisheries@gmail.com

KEIKI ART CONTEST DISPLAY @ WINDWARD MALL

October 6 from 10am-1pm

The theme for this year's contest is "Why is our fishing & seafood community important to me." Keiki 3rd-12th grade can enter. Cash and other prizes available. Entry by Sept. 21 for chance to win cash and other great prizes.

7TH ANNUAL HAWAII FISHING & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL @ Pier 38

October 7 from 9am-4pm

Help PIFG celebrate the final day of the Hawaii Fishing & Seafood Festival Week at Pier 38 from 9am-4pm. Free admission, Keiki Games, Live Entertainment Featuring Sean Na'auao, fish diplays, ono food and lots of fun for the Ohana.

Find us on Facebook

All event details visit www.hawaiifishingfestival.com

NOAA BARBLESS CIRCLE HOOK PROJECT

Kurt Kawamoto, (808) 983-5326, kurt.kawamoto@noaa.gov